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Grand Teton National Park News Release

Grand Teton Fire Managers Plan Prescribed Fire This Weekend

MOOSE, WY —Grand Teton National Park fire managers are preparing for a key prescribed fire this weekend, September 26-27, if weather conditions remain conducive. Fire managers have been planning the 371-acre Matilda Prescribed Fire for several years, but the fuels in the area have either been too wet or too dry to burn.

The project will prompt trail and road closures over the weekend. There will be a temporary closure of the Two Ocean Lake Trail and a portion of the Emma Matilda Trail that is accessed at the Two Ocean Lake Trailhead and from a pullout along the Pacific Creek Road. A portion of this trail will be utilized as the western boundary of the project area. The Two Ocean Lake Road will be closed, and the Pacific Creek Road will be closed to the public, although residents, outfitters and their clients will have restricted access.

The Matilda Prescribed Fire is two miles northwest of Moran, and is bordered by Emma Matilda Lake to the west and the junction of Pacific Creek and Two Ocean Lake Roads in Grand Teton National Park.

This prescribed fire addresses timber mixed with deadfall on the east side of Emma Matilda Lake. The unit is 1 1/3 mile west of the Pacific Creek Subdivision, which is identified in the 2005 Teton County Community Wildfire Protection Plan as the third priority out of 19 communities at risk.

Completion of this prescribed fire will increase the chances for controlling a wildfire before it reaches private structures. Lightning fires on Lozier Hill and north of Emma Matilda Lake have the tendency to spread to this area east of the lake. Should a wind-driven fire spread into the thick stands of mixed conifer and deadfall, it would exhibit active fire behavior with groups of trees torching, making fire suppression challenging.

A prescribed fire allows fire managers to conduct a safe burn under optimal conditions with resources available to meet objectives. Once burned, the unit will provide a buffer between the forested area and the Pacific Creek Subdivision. Due to the aspect of the site, it is typically a wet area that would be too damp to meet objectives if burned in the spring or later fall.

For each prescribed fire, fire managers work with other resource managers for several years planning and writing a specific prescription that includes parameters for smoke impacts, wind speed and direction, relative humidity, fuel moisture for live and dead burnable vegetation, and more. The plans also delineate types and numbers of resources needed to safely conduct each burn and to support contingency plans.

For more detailed information including a map of the burn area, please visit www.tetonfires.com and click on the prescribed fire link.

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www.nps.gov/grte

Grand Teton National Park and John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway preserve over 333,000 acres in northwest Wyoming for future generations. Over 2.7 million people visit the park and parkway each year to enjoy the Teton Range, pristine mountain lakes, the Snake River, and the valley of Jackson Hole. Visit us at www.nps.gov/grte, on www.facebook.com/GrandTetonNPS, via www.twitter.com/GrandTetonNPS, and at www.instagram.com/grandtetonnps.